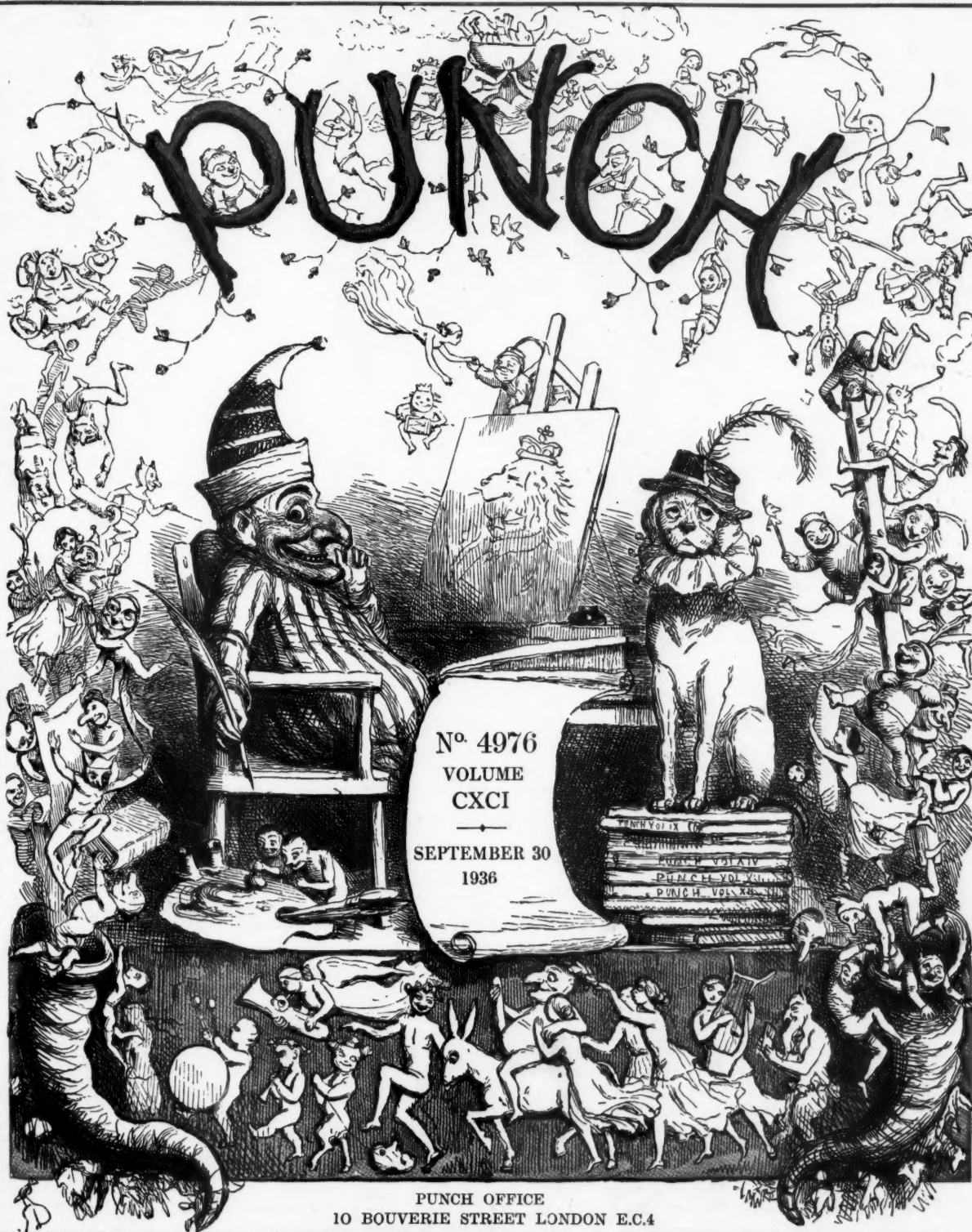


MOTOR UNION INSURANCE CO. LTD.

ALL CLASSES OF INSURANCE TRANSACTED



10, ST. JAMES'S STREET, S.W.1.

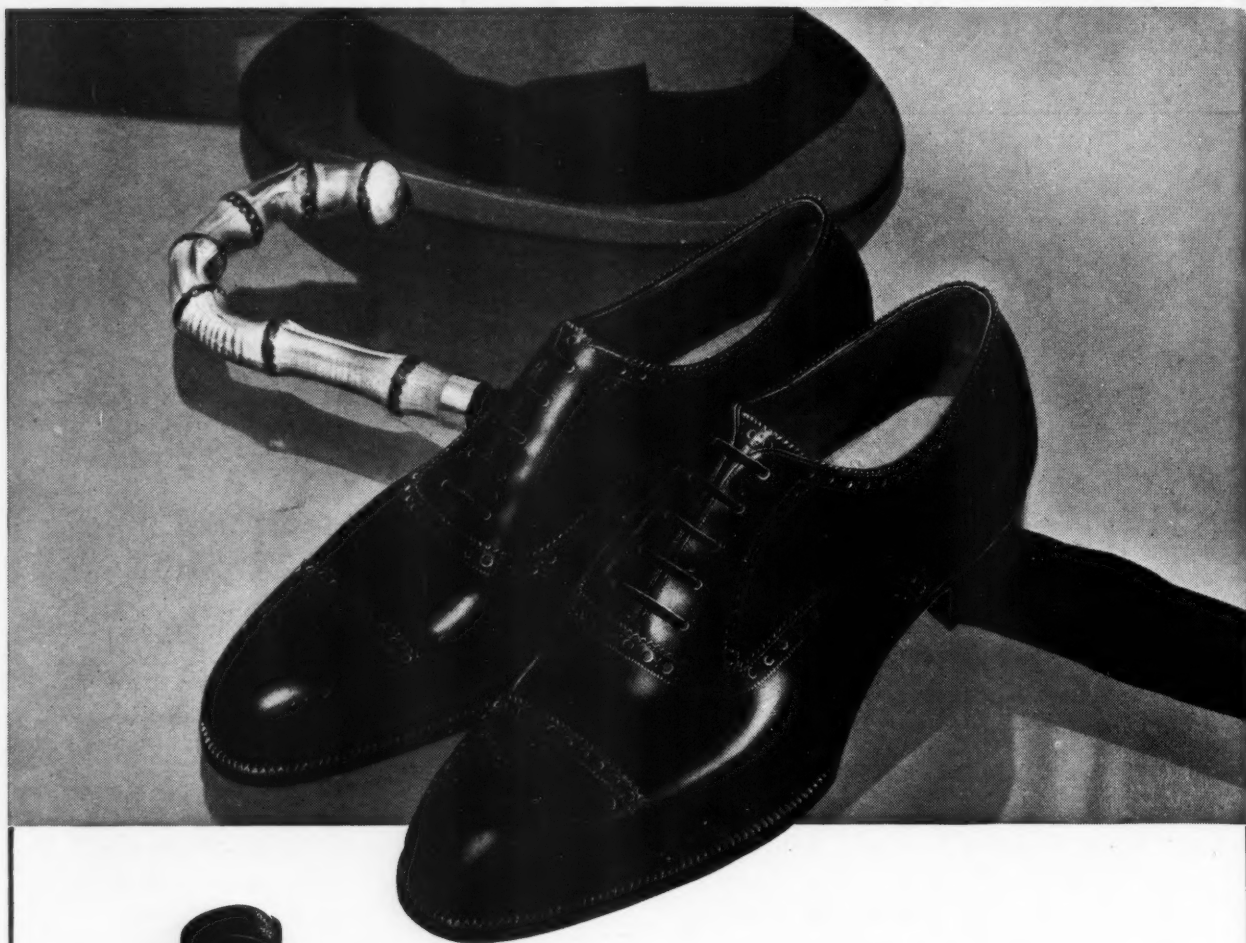


PUNCH OFFICE
10 BOUVERIE STREET LONDON E.C.4

"Fit and Forget"

K·L·G

Sparkling Plugs



DESIGN FOR PROSPERITY

A man in my position must impress clients with an appearance of prosperity and smartness. *Smartness*—that's the word. Difficult, of course, to combine it with a good durable shoe that'll keep out the wet. But I've easily solved that problem long ago. My shoes are always Saxone. They give me assurance and confidence to put my foot down anywhere.

Style 1523. The London Brogue in fine Black Calf with leather sole. Also made in Brown Calf - 30/-.

S A X O N E
shoes

tailored **TO FIT EVERY FOOT**

LONDON: 229 Regent Street, 58 Strand, 11 Cheapside, 59 Old Broad Street, 64 Gracechurch Street, and throughout the suburbs and in every large town in the Country. If no store in your district, you can send your order direct.

SAXONE SHOE COMPANY LIMITED, KILMARNOCK, SCOTLAND

Charivaria

A FINANCIER has announced that he is going to write his reminiscences "when he gets time." But will they allow it then?

★ ★ ★

"Most of our so-called 'True Stories' are pure fiction," declares a librarian. Whereas most of our "Fiction Stories" are not.

★ ★ ★

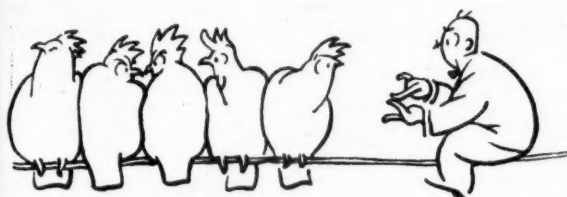
A Chinese temple has been discovered which was begun many thousands of years ago and never completed. No doubt the Committee appointed to get up the usual bazaar were, as so often happens, unable to agree on a chairman.

★ ★ ★

Complaint is made that the modern piano looks like a cocktail-cabinet. The revelation of its real purpose is a cruel disappointment.

★ ★ ★

A race was won last week by a horse that had been second in its last nine appearances on the race-course. Oxford papers, please copy.



"Business does not pay while my hens lay eggs at a penny each," complains a poultry-farmer. Perhaps if he explained matters to them honestly and straightforwardly they might be prepared to take less.

★ ★ ★

SIR,—Of the twenty-two passengers in my compartment on the 8.6 this morning all were reading their *Punches* except five, who were breathing (by numbers) down my neck and reading mine. Is this a record?

Yours limply,

Life-long Subscriber.

★ ★ ★

The Diamond Jubilee of the telephone will shortly be celebrated. Quietly, by many subscribers.

★ ★ ★

"The natives of some parts of Africa sit and stare at each other for



hours, only emitting an occasional disgusted grunt," writes an explorer. So all they need to make them completely civilised is two packs of cards and some scorers.

★ ★ ★

A magazine writer tells us that nettles can be used as a substitute for spinach. It only remains to find a substitute for nettles.

★ ★ ★

Soviet agents have bought pedigree long-woolled sheep in Lincolnshire for export to Russia. The wool doubtless will be used for pulling over the eyes of the proletariat.



A new Austrian play to be produced shortly will have a cast of several hundreds. So if it's a flop the cast will be able to out-bog the audience.

★ ★ ★

A man admitted to hospital is under the delusion that no one wishes to speak to him. It is thought that he must be a telephone-operator.

★ ★ ★

"Insects possess amazing strength," declares a naturalist. A wasp, for instance, can lift a twelve-stone man about three feet in the air.

★ ★ ★

According to a physiologist, Nature always compensates for weakness in one part of the human frame by developing another. Thus, if a man's right leg becomes shorter than his left, the left one almost invariably becomes longer than the right.

★ ★ ★

An American horticulturist is hoping to produce a new vegetable that will taste exactly like caviar. We fear, however, that he still has a hard roe to hoe.

★ ★ ★

Thirty firemen formed a guard of honour at the wedding of a colleague. They were no doubt prepared to put out any old flames.



Garden Rubbish

By the Authors of "1066 And All That"

NATURE STUDIES

BROWN STUDY (FOR PREFECTS ONLY)

A Sort of Biography of Dame Nature

I.—RUDE BEGINNING

NATURE began with the Golden Age, when our rude forefathers used to worship Nature.

This was for some reason known as *Nature worship*, and it was all (alas) rather vulgar and unsuitable and for Adults Only, since *fauns* and *centaurs* used to rush about playing fast-and-loose, hide-and-squeak and other not very Olympic games with the golden wood-nymphs and Bright Young Dryads of the period, while *satyrs* (hairy bounders) pranced brazenly up and down in a state of nature lewdly singing "Cuckoo!" and other reprehensible slogans.

Indeed it is impossible to disguise the fact that Nature in this rudist age was rather a Bad Thing.

II.—ROMAN PREOCCUPATIONS

Naturam expellas furca tamen usque recurrit.

Diplodocus mi.

The Romans, who came after the Golden Age, also started off rather badly by worshipping Nature, but soon abandoned this and invented the much more Roman idea of pushing Nature out with a fork.



They found, however, that whenever they did that, Nature (alas) invariably came back again. After a time they began to feel that it was a monotonous invention and not very triumphant after all, and were trying to think of a really good way of subjugating Nature when they discovered that they had pushed her too far and that Nature, recurring as usual in hexameters, but this time with *revengeful foot*, had saddled them with the most ineradicable and boring THING that has ever appeared on the surface of the Earth.



This Thing (they learned to their horror) was called the Cornucopia, and appeared to be a form of twisted symbolical bedsack or umbilical jelly-bag, the true purpose of which, as they realised at the first glance, would never (alas) be revealed to mankind.

However, being by temperament a jollicose and bellicund kind of people, they faced up to the Thing and began defiantly filling it with Plenty of fruit and cereals and so on, and tried not to lose their tempers when the fruit, etc., kept falling out symbolically at the top; while the Greeks, whom they called in as usual to explain the tragedy, decided that the Thing was (on the one hand) an Eleusinian Mystery, since nobody was able to discover what was at the bottom of it.

Note.—Professor DE CAROT's conjecture (on the other hand) is not only undignified but groundless, not to say fruitless—see Fig. 1.

The Romans never managed to conquer the Cornucopia, though they evidently succeeded at least once in pushing it out (probably with a fork) since it is recorded that they were furious when one of their leaders, *FABIUS CUNCTATOR*, by *delaying* (literally) *restored the Thing*. To this day Civilization continues to be helpless (with anger—or sometimes with laughter) in face of the Cornucopia.



Fig. 1.
PROF. DE CAROT'S
CONJECTURE

III.—TAME NATURE

The Romans were still coping with the Cornucopia when the Barbarians burst in on them, and Nature took advantage of the resulting confusion to become once more quite unsubjugated and disorderly, so that during the Dark Ages there was some danger of everybody going Cuckoo again.

It must have been about this time that the woods became full of filmy faeries, over-painted rouge dragons and badly-behaved ogres. Which was all rather wizard



C. OF E.

but not really a good thing, so that Nature soon had to be converted to Christianity by ST. FRANCIS and ST. JEROME and other Zoophilous parsons, while good KING ARTHUR and his jolly decent Knights cleaned up the mediæval



THE MOUTHPIECE; OR, A PRESENT FOR MARGATE

[Mr. NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN is speaking in place of Mr. BALDWIN at the Annual Conference of the Conservative Party this week.]

backwoods and turned them into virgin forests, so that they would be ready for QUEEN ELIZABETH.

As a result, Nature became C. of E. and therefore rather tame, and during the Age of Piety more or less fell into disuse except for bringing forth the fruits of earth in due season (i.e., just in time for the Harvest Festival).

IV.—BLAME NATURE.

But with the coming of the Elizabethans, including SHAKESPEARE and SPENSER and other unbridled poets Nature became much too jolly again, and gratuitously introduced a wave of *Euphonious Shepherds* who went footling and footling about, blowing their oaten pipes, sowing their wild flutes, toots, etc., all over the place, so that everyone began dancing hey-hey and aroundelay—those who were neat and whimsy succeeding, naturally,



in footling it feately here and there, while those who were just fat and clumsy merely succeeded (alackaday) in tripping over the green-sward.

Questioned a little later by the Puritans as to who-the-devil all these Shepherds really were, Nature replied

(rather cryptically) that they were *Arcadians*, and threatened England with the Cornucopia.

Note.—This gesture resulted as usual in the fruit, etc., falling out symbolically at the top, whereupon a clever young wood-carver called GRINLING GIBBONS nipped in and got away with the Swag.)

Meanwhile the Puritans continued to adopt a rather high-hat attitude and insisted that Nature was not only a bad thing but practically a Scarlet Woman, while the poets made rather dashing experiments with Nature, such as holding (as 'twere) the mirror up to it—though most people at this time were in favour of leaving it alone (as 'twas).

V.—DAME NATURE

Obviously things could not go on like this, and even the wicked Wits of the Restoration Drama agreed that since the idea was now to do away with confusions of all kinds and have an Age of Reason, Nature would have to be tidied up like everything else. So in their cattish way



they declared that she was a country frumpkin and vastly *passée*, and dubbed her *Dame Nature*.

In the following century Dr. JOHNSON showed his

approval of this by arranging his friends tidily in a circle, with himself exactly in the middle, and walking about circumspectly in formal gardens making obsequious remarks about Nature, all of which began with "Sir!" In fact people were all behaving quite tidily and reasonably until towards the end of the century the Courtiers of France suddenly unhinged everybody, including Dame Nature, by introducing a wave of fancy-dress milkmaids and maddening quilted-satin shepherdesses (with white wigs and white crooks tied with blue bows) in a desperate attempt (apparently) to dodge the French Revolution.

VI.—NATURE RUNS AMOK.

Nature thereupon went mad, and in this condition (alas) presented herself to the greatest minds of the 19th century in such a bewildering succession of theatrical disguises that they also became unhinged. Thus we find the good Mr. RUSKIN deliberately appalling himself with an Alp (viewed from afar), Sir WALTER SCOTT and other romantics declaring that Nature was not a bad woman but a Wild Thing, and the gentle poet ALFRED (Lord TENNYSON) seeing her Red (in tooth and claw); while Professor HUXLEY and his friends shocked everybody, including the Archbishops, by declaring that Man himself, despite all his attempts to bring Nature to reason, was nothing more than a Natural Phenomenon.

VII.—DAME NATURE, R.I.P.

This was too much, and from that moment all practical men set about the business, which to-day seems almost complete, of abolishing Nature altogether—not, however, without first allowing RALPH W. EMERSON and other frantic, romantic, not to say gigantic bores to embalm her memory in thousands of meaningless, contradictory and obviously balmy pronouncements; while nowadays the surviving Nature-worshippers are (temporarily) permitted to establish Bird-Sanctuaries, Natural History Museums and Societies for the Fossilization of Rural England, in order to confirm the impression that Nature (the green bits you see through the wind-screen-wiper) is an old has-been.



But Nature is not quite done for yet, and revenges herself to-day by producing the fruits of the earth in season and out of season in such embarrassing profusion that at times the world resembles a gigantic Cornucopia, the meaning of which will never (alas) be revealed to mankind.

This presumably is the reason why the great Nations of the Earth are now engaged in dressing themselves up like Ogres and preparing to destroy each other utterly by deluges and artificial earthquakes, pestilences and



volcanoes in a desperate attempt (apparently) to dodge the millennium. . . .

(To be continued.)

After Long Years

"My dear old chap, you haven't changed a day!"

But with the words my heart was numb with pain
As, gazing with incredulous dismay,
The picture of the mind revived again.
The locks now scant and grey
Grew brown, the eyes brave blue,
Until I had the laughing lad
That once was you,

Whose lissom legs would stride in step with mine
After the loping hare, or whose firm hand
Would guide the sights in steady nerveless line
Upon the wheeling pigeon; who would land
From waters fresh or brine
The fish of stream and sea;
Who many a time set out to climb
The hills with me;

Who in the chimney-corner of a night
(Down at the "Duck and Spade") would often sit
The while we spun us yarns for our delight
And struck the air alight with flashing wit
And crammed the sweet hours tight
With talk and heady brew,
Nor paused to think from drink to drink
How fast they flew.

This I recalled as flashed upon a screen;
That much of you which still survived the rout,
Starting the motor of the mind's machine
To give the sad display and peter out.
From what you once had been
Rewoke reality:
So old and strange, the cruel change
Quite winded me.

For I had leant on you as on a rock,
Nursing your memory with close caress;
And, as Time's flood with ever fiercer shock
Whirled round and took my friends, I'd murmur "Yes,
But we thy fury mock;
We are not built on sand,
But side by side against the tide
Firm-footed stand."

And, oh, to see you thus I felt alone,
The solitary survivor of my race . . .
When suddenly I heard a sort of moan
And saw your eyes fixed sadly on my face,
And then in trembling tone:
"Young Archie, I suppose?"
And, rather red, you turned your head
And blew your nose.



"I'VE SOMETHING VERY IMPORTANT TO TELL YOU, FATHER."

"TELL ME, THEN, BUT JUST SWITCH OFF THAT SLOPPY SENTIMENTAL MUSIC FIRST."

"OH, NO, FATHER. I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR THAT."

Celestial Eggs

THE Emperor Wang (says the historian) was spending the autumn at his country pagoda called Effulgence in order that his natural gaiety might be enhanced by the rustic wit and courteous if unpolished bonhomie of the peasantry, concerning which many of the Court poets had written charming lyrics. The morning after his arrival, as he was viewing the landscape and inhaling agricultural odours with qualified approval, he caught sight of a man shedding tears as he moved about his work in the fields.

"Go Long," he said to his Chancellor, "who is that person and why does he blubber so heartily?"

"He is probably a peasant, Your Majesty," replied Go Long indifferently.

"Impossible," said the Emperor. "I am told on the highest literary authority that the peasant overflows with cheerfulness to such an extent that he is liable at any moment to burst into song and execute some steps of an uncouth but enthusiastic dance."

"It is not for this lowbrow worm," observed Go Long with dignity, "to question the accuracy of Your Majesty's information. In the intervals between the moments of hilarity of which Your Majesty speaks, however, the peasant is subject to long periods of deep depression. He weeps when it rains and, conversely, when it does not rain. He laments when the crops are poor. He utters animal cries of pain when they are plentiful and prices are in consequence low."

"This is intensely interesting," remarked the Emperor. "Bring me yonder peasant that I may find what manifestation of Nature provokes his tears."

Accordingly the peasant, still shedding tears, was brought in, and kow-towed.

"Dry your tears," ordered Go Long, "and inform the Source of Perpetual Merriment of the cause of your grief."

"This lowborn reptile," said the man, "who was called Bang by his contemptible parents, is overcome with

"Has any Government official visited this farm?" queried the latter.

"This undigified lout's farm has so far been visited by famine, pestilence, hookworm, bots and blind staggers," replied Bang, "but not by Government officials."

"That is doubtless the reason for your misfortunes," replied Go Long. "If Your Majesty approves, I shall

obtain expert advice from the appropriate Department, and the sorrowing Bang will cut in expert but whole-hearted capers when his hens vie with the ostrich if not with the roc."

"Which is the appropriate Department?" asked the Emperor.

"I shall cause inquiries to be instituted at once," replied Go Long.

"When I have discovered it I shall memorialise the Mandarin in charge, who will thereupon take steps to have the usual steps taken."

The peasant was then dismissed and Go Long hurried off to institute inquiries. An interval of time then passed and at its expiry Go Long was questioned by the Emperor (who had again come to spend the autumn season at the country pagoda called Effulgence) as to the progress of affairs.

"All is well, Your Majesty," answered Go Long. "This

unchaste fool found that the correct Department was that of Agriculture and Fishponds."

"Why this curious combination?" asked the Emperor.

"It must be a wise combination," replied Go Long, "or the Department would not have adopted it. The Mandarin in charge learns all about agriculture in the pagoda called Gloom. He then learns all about fish in the pagoda called Veracity. He then correlates his information in the pagoda called Infallibility."



"THANK YOU, DRIVER, NO. YOU SEE, WE'VE SEEN ATHENS."

sorrow because his hens have entered into a conspiracy."

"Do they then refuse to lay eggs?" asked Wang, knitting his brows.

"Not at all, Your Majesty," replied the man, smiting his bosom with one hand and pouring dust on his head with the other. "They evade their responsibilities by a highly ingenious piece of low cunning. They lay eggs, it is true, but only little ones."

"Can you assign any reason for this anti-social act?" asked the Emperor, turning to Go Long.



"GARN! I COULD BUY AN' SELL YER."

"AN' I COULD GIT YER FER NOTHIN' AN' GIVE YER AWAY."

"I see," said the Emperor. "Now detail the steps taken to increase the size of the eggs laid by the hens of the peasant Bang."

"An additional pagoda has been built," replied Go Long, "called Conference. In this the experts of the Department dispute day and night."

"Why?" asked Wang.

"They desire to settle the question, which came first, the hen or the egg," replied Go Long. "They feel that it is necessary to get down to first principles, and the zeal of the speakers is only equalled by the smoothness of their diction and the richness of their metaphors. Moreover, the lower or practical branch of the Department has not been idle. Monographs have been prepared and a work in twelve volumes entitled *An Introduction to the Study of the Egg* is even now being taken round from farm to farm, where official lecturers, specially chosen for their beautifully modulated voices, read extracts from it to the farmers in the pauses which fatigue often imposes in the course of the day's agricultural opera-

tions. Charming tinted representations of eggs large and small, executed by the distinguished hands of the Department's experts, have been circulated to all the peasants in order that they may know the correct size of the egg to expect."

"It is always permitted to expect," mused the Emperor. "Does the Mandarin in charge of the Department expect anything?"

"There is unfortunately no Order suitable to the occasion in existence," replied Go Long. "If this humble proletarian may make a suggestion, it is that a new Order—that of the Golden Egg—be created for his benefit. His second-in-command, who has worn himself to a shadow in studying the cacophony practised by hens after laying, might well be rewarded with the same Order, in silver."

"How did this victim of duty study the cacophony of hens?" asked Wang.

"He studied the reports of his subordinates, who had instructed their executive officers to listen to the hens," replied Go Long.

"This devotion to duty is most touching," said Wang. "Now let us visit the peasant Bang."

Accordingly they proceeded to the farm of Bang. The farmyard was crowded with officials and lecturers, through whom Bang, weeping loudly, forced a passage.

"How now, my poor fellow?" said Wang. "Are your eggs still small?"

"No, Your Majesty," sobbed Bang. "The unfortunate fowls are so incommoded by the throngs of lecturers and officials that they have no room to lay any eggs at all." W. G.

At the Cinema

A gentleman home from Milwaukee sat patiently through a long "Talkie"; he considered the ending was much too heart-rending, and the voice of the GARBO too squawky.

"At the fair the Lord Mayor of — will first support the Duke from the chair and then carry him off to tea."—*Yorks Paper*.
Some of the aldermen might help.



Cosy Corner Or, Uplift For Everyman

SUN-BATHING

ALL week the sun was blazing down, but you were at your desk in town. Your comrades gambolled on the links, pursued the grouse or saw the Sphinx, or got (with ladies) photographed reclining on a rock or raft; while you augmented the amount of someone else's bank-account (for that, to take a modest view, is all that any of us do).

Then Saturday, the toiler's goal, came in quite nicely on the whole. The haze about the City spires suggested sunshine in the Shires; and, sure enough, the sun did look upon the crowded train you took, as in a Third, more full than most, you sweated southward to the coast.

But when you put your foot upon the platform at East Littleton, at once, *instantly*, in a trice, as if by magical device, as if a fiend in wanton fun had clapped a snuffer on the sun, a darkness, shocking to the eye, eliminates the summer sky. As bulky as a feather-bed, black clouds assemble overhead; and what is odd, to say the least, they hurry from the south and east, although the wind is in the west. But doubtless all is for the best; you canter to the beach, assume the University costume, and, huddled by the ocean's brim, you wonder if you want to swim.

The wind, as far as you can tell, is blowing now from north as well. From whatsoever point it blows it makes you snuffle at the nose, and under your dejected view your ankles turn a nasty blue. The children, callous little fools, still paddle gaily in the pools; their parents, wearing all they own, unhappily inhale ozone. The sea has gone a horrid green, like soup too long in the tureen, and roaring in the rudest way bombards you with an icy spray, while breakers with alarming tops go off like guns or ginger-pops. The sea, in short, does all it can to make itself unfit for Man.

The wind is wicked, and at last the

limit of the old is passed; collecting their reluctant young, they take them bedward, giving tongue; and you, as lively as a leech, are left alone upon the beach. And you are near surrender too. But suddenly a spot of blue, a patch no larger than a pea appears above the frightful sea; as if an angel, for a lark, had made a puncture in the dark; and as so often in the tale of the tremendous British male the faintest hope is quite enough to make the fellow do his stuff. Some cheery thing the doctor said encouragingly fills your head—the sun may do you lots of good, though not behaving as he should; the body profits from the *air*, especially if it is bare. You cannot swim but still you may enjoy an ultra-something ray. You glance along the empty shore, undo a shoulder-strap, and *Lor!* a Beach-Inspector in your ear exclaims "You can't do that there here!" East Littleton is so refined that nakedness of any kind is more than commonly suppressed; and nakedness includes the chest. The face, the feet, though poorly shaped, the female back need not be draped, but manly chest must *not* be shown, although the owner's quite alone. For day and night the steamers pass, equipped with magnifying-glass; and what if in the crow's-nest high some mariner should chance to try his telescope upon the town and see a Briton getting brown! . . .

Sir, at this hour, I beg you, be a mass of equanimity. Remember what excesses mar the lands where those dictators are: be grateful this is not a clime where earthquakes happen half the time; nor are men flying to and from East Littleton to drop a bomb. Remember, many of the Croats have not got gramophones or votes. And thank your stars that you are free to bask in Britain by the sea. A. P. H.

Our Battalion Receives

THE War Office have up their sleeves many little dodges for the subtle stimulation of recruiting; but a new and rather formidable one has recently been introduced. This is the Battalion "At Home"—an ordeal from which we at Ypres Barracks have just emerged.

A Battalion "At Home" is not quite as you may visualize it at first blush, namely, a crowded tea-and-reception in the Regimental Institute, with all the battalion acting as hosts. There is no question of, say, our Private Barrel moving graciously from group to group, saying, "China or Indian,

Lady Golightly?" or our Corporal Foresight explaining that they're *foie gras* in the right hand and egg-and-cream in the left. No, the thing is cast in a sterner mould. The barracks, from orderly room to stables, are swept, garnished and set in order; guides, music and various sideshows of a military flavour are laid on; and then the general public is loosed into it all for the afternoon. The intention is that they will see for themselves how fat the British soldier cuts it and will instantly rush off to the recruiting office to get in on this soft thing.

This being the idea, you can well understand that in the very necessary stage management of the affair a certain insistence is laid on the cook-houses, with their appetising and varied menus, on the neatly-furnished messes with table-cloths and flowers, and on the many recreational facilities rather than on fatigue-duties or the sinister significance of the orderly-room mat. And while the guests are invited to indulge in a spot of machine-gun firing, sending up S.O.S. rockets and other jolly bits of army fun, it is never suggested that they take part in a twenty-mile route-march in full marching order.

Needless to say, the business requires a certain amount of advance preparation and publicity. For several days before our own reception we flooded the town with posters and folders saying that we'd be "At Home" all next Wednesday afternoon and that "YOU MAY—Take part in a Miniature Rifle Shooting Competition, Visit the Gas Chamber, Telephone by Wireless, Go into the Barrack Room and See the Messes"—an unfortunate juxtaposition this last, which D Company, who'd been slated for a dirty barrack-room the previous week, took rather personally—and so on. One large exhortatory poster, by the way, which pointed an inquiring finger at all and sundry from the front of the Town Hall and among other inducements asked invitingly: "Have you ever fired a machine-gun?" was rather weakened in popular appeal by the bitter supplementary question: "Have you ever cleaned one?" added in pencil by a hand unknown, but obviously that of one of our gunners.

For the *clou* of our entertainment we borrowed an R.F.A. battery, rather as one film company borrows another's stars "by kind permission of Metro-Gaumont-Lion." Indeed our programme actually read that "at 5.0 P.M. Guns would Come into Action and Open Fire by Kind Permission of Lieut.-Col. C. de Bigge Bundook, R.A." It seemed to lend an air of uncertainty

to the event; one felt it quite likely that at 4.59 p.m. the gallant Colonel might suddenly get coy and refuse to give permission after all. But as the programme also stated that the Band would play "Selections from Three-Thirty," as though he were some foreign composer, we felt that the general intention was fairly clear.

On the whole, we think our "At Home" went off well. No one was gassed or was shot, though one old lady was both astonished and annoyed to learn that only blanks were used in the machine-gun. Considering that while being fired it was completely surrounded by a circle of spectators, it hadn't seemed to us quite feasible to use real rounds; but there's no pleasing some people. Just another of those dear old things who like a nice bit of blood!

The S.O.S. rockets, on the other hand, certainly provided any otherwise lacking element of risk. What with the unskilled firers at our end of the trajectory, the actual S.O.S.'s were really more appropriate at the other. We scored bulls all over the place: on the C.O.'s garden, on the roof of the Forage Store (twice), on some highly inflammable window-curtains in the sergeants' mess—and, judging from the immediate resultant blasphemy inside, we rather think on some highly inflammable sergeants as well. In fact the only dud was that picked by hand by Lieutenant Holster and formally reserved for the Mayor to fire!

On balance, however, we scored over the S.O.S. rocket business, for our Fire Picquet was kept so consistently on the double the whole afternoon putting out the subsequent fires that by the end of the day they could reach the point of outbreak before the rocket itself did, and with this training won us a large silver cup in the Garrison relay race the following week.

The humorous element was of course provided by our Private Pullthrough, for Colonel Howitzer, having remarked seriously the day before that an exhibition bed should be "made down" in an A Company barrack-room, added jokingly that there ought really to be an exhibition soldier in it. Sergeant-Major Magazine, who is not exactly attuned to joking suggestions from Colonels, took this literally, with the result that on the big afternoon Private Pullthrough was discovered by Lieutenant Swordfrog lolling about in more-than-Oriental splendour in a pair of green silk pyjamas, chatting to a blonde admirer of his from the town. As the pyjamas had been borrowed from Private Rifle, batman, who had omitted the formality of borrowing



"WHEN YOU SAY YOU LOVE ME, BERT, ARE YOU SURE YOU 'AVEN'T YOUR TONGUE IN YOUR CHEEK?"

them from Lieutenant Swordfrog, his officer, and as Swordfrog recognised his property just at the moment Pullthrough's best girl entered the barrack-room and recognised the blonde, the arrival down the chimney of an S.O.S. rocket fired by Private Trigger's aunt (off) was considered opportune.

Whether there has been any marked increase of recruiting we don't yet know, but we feel that there are very many civilians who are well equipped in one way to be good soldiers; for the scrounging throughout the day was terrific. More than half the battalion lost its swagger-canes, while missing spoons, mess-tins, water-bottles and

even table-cloths ran into high figures. Even a horse disappeared, but was discovered afterwards simply to have taken the evening off on its own and not to have been smuggled out by a barrack-lifter. A list, compiled by the Quarter-Master and headed "Losses—Reported Missing after General Public's Tour of Ypres Barracks," was laid apprehensively on the Colonel's table next morning, but he took it very well. But perhaps this was just relief at the matter not being as serious as he had at first glance thought, for, owing to a typographical error, the initial word read "Lasses" instead of "Losses."

A. A.

At the Pictures

LENGTH BUT NO MAGNITUDE

WOULD the twelve million people



J.H.D.

THE GOOD OLD DAYS

Don Luis CLAUDE RAINS

who have read *Anthony Adverse* excuse me for a moment while I outline the story to the half-dozen outcasts who have not? That is, while I outline the story of the film. How far this differs from the book I am unable to say, as I have a good deal in common with the half-dozen outcasts; but persons more happily situated claim to detect a close resemblance.

Well, it all begins very rightly and properly in a coach, with lovely *Maria* travelling to her nice new home with her not very nice new husband. This *Don Luis* has gout and spends his honeymoon with his feet in hot water, leaving *Maria* deplorably free to spend hers in the company of *Denis Moore*, a handsome young officer who has followed her from Paris or somewhere. But even gout comes to an end eventually. There are alarms and excursions—the latter over about half of Europe—and in the course of them *Denis* is killed, *Maria* dies in childbirth at a lonely chalet in the Alps, and *Don Luis* leaves the baby (not, it must be confessed, his own) at a convent. There

the child, afterwards to be named *Anthony Adverse*, is brought up until he is old enough to be apprenticed to a wealthy Leghorn merchant, one *John Bonnyfeather*.

Will it come as a surprise to you to learn that this same *Bonnyfeather* was the father of *Maria*? Probably it will. But it wouldn't if you had seen the bits of the film I have left out in this brief summary. Anyway, *Anthony* grows to manhood in the business, marries *Angela*, the cook's daughter, turns up late for an appointment with her and, in the distressing way they have on the films, loses all track of her for the next five years. How many more times must I implore film-heroines, when leaving notes behind for their young men, to see that they are fixed firmly to the old oak door? This one blows off into a bush and of course the great galoot never sees it.

Meanwhile (this beautiful word, redolent of the old Wild West days, actually occurs at the end of one of the captions in this film) *NAPOLEON* begins to be troublesome in North Italy and the House of *Bonnyfeather* has to close down. *Anthony* is sent off to Havana to collect a debt, an operation which eventually leads him to Africa and the slave-trade. Here he becomes very

grim and merciless in the pursuit of wealth and power, and has to have a lesson—never mind what, now. Back at last in Leghorn, he finds that *Bonnyfeather* is dead, goes to Paris to collect his inheritance (not without a



J.H.D.

LABOURS OF AN IMPRESARIO

Donizetti ESMÉ PERCY

bit of bother from *Don Luis*, still an active and engaging villain), and is at last reunited with *Angela*, who introduces him to his unsuspected son.

At this point I began to grope for my hat, but the rest of the audience, who had clearly read their twelve hundred pages to the bitter end, remained ominously still. And they were right. We had still to learn that *Angela* had become, in *Anthony's* absence, the protégée of *NAPOLEON* (I take the word with gratitude from the programme), and to see *Anthony* and son sadly boarding a ship and sailing away for the west.

So there it is. If this account has seemed overlong and rather tedious, I can only plead that in that case it gives a fairly accurate impression of the film itself. Probably it was a mistake to try to make a picture of so diffuse a book as *Anthony Adverse*. It must have been extremely difficult to compress the story even within its present limits of two hours and twenty minutes—and that is about forty minutes too long.

FREDRIC MARCH is of course extremely competent as



J.H.DOWD

SONG-SOOTHED

Bert Puddick GEORGE MOZART
Nell JOAN FRED EMNEY
Zinga PAUL ROBESON

Anthony, and several of the countless minor parts are excellently played. EDMUND GWENN as *Bonnyfeather* spent most of his time in tears. His eyes, one might say, were constantly brimming. But the audience fortunately were made of sterner stuff.

It would be nice after being so disrespectful to the affair at the Tivoli to raise a whoop of joy over *The Song of Freedom* at the Plaza. But here again rapture must be modified. PAUL ROBESON's singing is magnificent; no considerations whatever should prevent you going to hear him. Nor is there anything particularly wrong with the story. Briefly, *Zinga* (ROBESON), a negro working in the London Docks, has one great ambition, to find out what part of Africa his ancestors came from and to return there to be among his own people. He is "discovered" by *Donizetti*, an *impresario*, becomes a great singer, learns by chance that he is a descendant of the royal line of a certain island off the coast of Africa and takes

his wife out there to claim his kingship. He finds the people backward, superstitious and hostile. Only in the nick of time does he prove his claim by singing the "King Song," which has been handed down to him through the generations. This might have been made into a quite sound picture, but the actual result is very disappointing. There is some shockingly poor acting, and the direction, particularly of the African scenes, is astonishingly bad. Not for a moment is the imagination gripped or the marrow chilled by all the drum-beating and ritual hopscotch. The sinister witch-doctor is a sort of stock silly-ass, and there is a benevolent elder of the tribe who looks like *Prospero* or (at a stretch) *John of Gaunt* in a Shakespearean touring company.

Still, as I say, PAUL ROBESON sings.

H. F. E.

First Prize

"The best thing to do with tired legs is to give them thorough rest."—*Domestic Chat*.

Tea Piece

LET Nature dim with brown and red
Her gold—
Let all our nudists be half dead
With cold,
I for no bard's autumnal wailings care
One single pin,
Since longed-for fires salute the chilly air
And crumpets have come in.
You nobly-buttered steaming stack
Of joy,
With glistening eyes I hail you back,
Oh, boy!
Yet, stay. With one sad tear I must
bedew
The memory
Of youth's glad days when five or six
of you
Were not too much for me. D. C.

"NELSON ALONE STANDS AGAINST
ANTI-GAS PRECAUTIONS"

Provincial Press.

So it looks as if England can keep on
expecting.



THE BRITISH CHARACTER

INABILITY OF BRITISH BROADCASTING ANNOUNCERS TO SPEAK ENGLISH

Mr. Silvertop—Matchmaker

"It's not so much special grub what you remembers," said Mr. Silvertop, "but special places what you've 'ad it in. The grub I 'appen to remember most was a tuck-in of 'arf-raw mackerel washed down with red ink. Last year it was. I went down for a week's 'oliday to my Cousin 'Oskin, 'oo's a copper in New'aven. 'E was took up something terrible with a young woman named 'Azel, 'oose Ma and Pa was sticky about 'Oskin on account of 'im 'aving passed forty and not 'aving no stripes. So 'e'd borrowed a motor-boat off a pal and asked 'em all out for a spin.

"Next morning was blazing 'ot, and we met down by the 'arbour. Not a bad-looking piece, 'Azel, on the lumpy side, but 'er Pa and Ma would 'ave made anyone but 'Oskin think twice. Pa looked like a retired 'eavyweight 'oo'd just 'ad 'is presentation ticker pinched and Ma put me in mind of one of them big birds what eats nails for breakfast.

"I must be back by twelve," she ses, very important, 'I got my sister coming by the one o'clock train.'

"Which way'd you like to go?' 'Oskin asks 'er.

"Straight out," she answers; 'I likes to get a view of the 'ole coast.'

"She got it all right. After an hour we agrees it's time to turn back, and 'Azel's family was beginning to thaw nicely. But they froze again good and 'ard a moment later, for the old 'Arriet Jane's engine suddenly went dumb. Pore 'Oskin goes pale as death and tries to make a joke of it, but 'e couldn't reely expect what you might call an 'early laugh when we'd all 'eard the big end go, plain as mutton—and not such a funny noise, neither, eight miles out with the wind blowing steady towards France.

"You understand I got to be back to meet that train?" ses 'Azel's Ma.

"I don't see 'ow you can," ses 'Oskin apologetic-like.

"What?" she cries. 'Why can't you row us?'

"I 'aven't any oars," ses 'Oskin, a bit defiant. 'E ought to have 'ad, of course."

"I thought you was so clever with your 'ands! Why don't you mend it?" growls Pa.

"Cos I'd 'ave to ask Coventry for spare parts, and the wireless operator's gone to lunch," ses 'Oskin, a-losing 'is wool at last. I couldn't 'elp laughing, and that fair tore it. You wouldn't believe 'ow they all carried on. Cor-

lumme! what a day we 'ad! I 'ad a mouth like the Sahoora and the others argued 'emselves to a standstill. Two or three steamers passed, but they only thought we was being matey when we waved. I reckoned we'd drift on to the French coast 'arf-way through the night, and I 'oped and prayed they wouldn't all be shut.

"The sun was going down when all of a sudden 'Azel cries 'Look!'—and there was a fishing-boat a-coming up on us with three blokes in it. We couldn't believe it at first. Soon as they gets close they 'ails us.

"They're Frenchies," I ses. 'Can any of you parley-voo?' None of 'em could. 'Lucky I picked up a bit back on the Somme,' I ses, and I shouts across what's 'appened. Well, we couldn't 'ave met with a kinder-'earted lot. Before we 'ardly knew what was 'appening they'd lashed the boats together and passed over a bottle of red wine and was frying up some mackerel for us. The skipper 'e treats 'Azel's Ma as if she'd been a duchess, and by the time we'd 'ad another bottle or two and as much mackerel as we could 'old, all the 'arsh words was forgotten and we might 'ave been a Sunday-school outing. It seemed the moment if ever to do something for pore 'Oskin, so I leans across to the skipper and we 'as a little private chat. 'E was an understanding sort of chap and a sport.

"Ow about asking 'em for a tow back to New'aven?" ses 'Azel's Pa. 'All right,' I ses, and puts it to the skipper. 'E looks very grave and asks a question.

"'E 'opes 'e won't be thought impertinent,' I translates, 'but 'e wants to know if you and 'Azel is engaged, 'Oskin?'

"Well," 'Oskin begins. 'Certainly not,' ses Ma.

"I tells the skipper that 'Azel's Ma and Pa won't 'ave it, and 'e lets fly an 'ole stream of 'is lingo. 'That's awkward,' I tells 'em, 'you see, 'e 'ad a dream last night in which 'is grandma told 'im 'e was about to be asked for 'elp by a couple 'oo 'ad a obstacle in the way of their 'appiness, and if 'e 'elped 'em before the obstacle was removed good and proper it meant drowning for 'im and them and whatever pals they 'ad with 'em.'

"Stuff and nonsense," ses 'Azel's Ma.

"Ere, tell 'im I'll give 'im a tenner," ses 'er Pa.

"'E's agreed to tow us for that,' I ses, 'but 'e won't budge about 'Azel and 'Oskin. You know 'ow superstitious these perishing salts are.' 'E can't leave us 'ere,' ses 'Azel's Ma.

"Oh yes, 'e can," I ses; 'e'd much rather do that than risk being drowned.' The skipper 'e passes a tincupful of brandy over to 'Azel's Ma and another to 'er Pa. After they'd mopped 'em they looked at each other. 'Well,' she ses, 'now that I come to think of it I can't reely remember what it was I 'ad against 'Oskin.' 'Nor can I,' ses Pa. 'Put it there, my boy!'

"Oo, Dad!" ses 'Azel. Pore 'Oskin just stutters with surprise. I translates to the skipper, 'oo ses something back. 'E wants it in writing,' I tells 'em, 'and we're all to sign.' I drew up a deed on the back of my gas-bill giving 'Azel permission to marry 'Oskin whenever she liked, and when we'd all signed we sealed it fair and square in the skipper's brandy.

"I can tell you, the run 'ome to New'aven was a bit diff'rent to the one out. The skipper insisted on 'Azel and 'Oskin 'aving the front of 'is boat to themselves, 'Azel's Ma sat with the sailors a-teaching them to sing 'Daisy, Daisy,' and the skipper and 'Azel's Pa and I played dice by a lantern in the 'Arriet Jane.

"It's funny the way things 'appen," Mr. Silvertop went on slowly. "Next afternoon 'Oskin, 'oo was so bucked 'e wasn't responsible, saved a titled lady's pekinese from being drowned and nearly got drowned 'imself, not being able to swim—and she kicked up such an 'ell of a fuss they 'ad to make 'im a sergeant. So 'e'd 'ave got 'is 'Azel anyway. But what 'e wouldn't 'ave got was the Frenchy skipper as godfather to 'Arriet Jane, 'oo was born last month!" ERIC.

The Motive

THIS story tells the simple truth behind a sensational mystery. Mr. John Turberville Parrot one morning received a communication which surprised and perplexed him. It came from an exceedingly well-known firm of photographers, and took the form of a request that he would, at his convenience, favour them with a sitting. A certain number of copies of the portrait would be given him gratis, but the reproduction rights would remain the property of the firm. Mr. Parrot did not understand the business at all, but an office colleague—very much overawed, by the way—explained that these photographers specialised in taking likenesses of the celebrated and selling them to newspapers which desired to publish them.

Now Parrot was not celebrated in any way whatever. He was as nearly

a nonentity as a living man can be. He had never done anything save earn enough to keep him, obscurely, as a bachelor without hobbies, vices or virtues. Had he ever contemplated such an adventure as going abroad for a holiday it would have been found that his life and personality barely afforded material sufficient to fill up a passport. So he failed to understand why he should have been asked to sit for his portrait. Perplexed, he brooded over the matter, and in course of time brooding had its effect.

Acquaintances saw no change in the man, yet when at length the day came for him to present himself at the photographers' studio he was no longer quite the nonentity who had received their bewildering request.

Now of course a mistake had been made. The invitation was intended for another John Turberville Parrot, who was gradually building a reputation as a collector of tram-tickets. His name was mentioned in tram-ticket-collecting circles with respect, and rumours of it reached the wide-awake agents of the photographic firm. Some day, they realised astutely, his collection might be the largest in Europe, or it might be stolen, or bequeathed to the nation, and then his portrait would have news value and they would obtain a return on their outlay.

Neither the receptionist nor the artist at the camera saw anything about

our Mr. Parrot when he entered the studio to suggest that he could not be the rising collector of tram-tickets, and as much trouble was taken to secure a speaking likeness as if he had been a Society Beauty or an eminent criminal. The sitter bore everything with amiable fortitude, and only when the operator was satisfied did he reveal the new personality that had gradually developed in him.

"Now may I inquire," he said, "why I was sent for to be photographed?"

The operator explained that such matters were not his concern, that the Head Office had their own methods of deciding upon subjects worthy of photographic record. "But I am sure," he added suavely, "that you must know the answer. Otherwise I must assume that you are eminent for modesty so profound as to be unique!"

"No," replied J. T. Parrot, now with a strange gleam in his eye. "I am not eminent for modesty. I am not distinguished in any way whatever. In the incident of my birth, to which I owe my one mention in the Press, I played only a passive part, and even that amount of publicity had to be paid for. Your employers, young man, have made a bad investment. Those negatives will occupy space, as will the relative references in the firm's books, for years and years, and will never be

called for. I have thought over this matter seriously, and realise that there is only one way in which my recorded features can ever become profitable to your firm. They will never be published as those of a man heaped with honours: let me earn for them an equal or greater value as those of the perpetrator of a startling and novel crime. I have here a revolver; with this I am about to shoot you. My portrait will immediately be in general demand; it will be featured in every newspaper in the country. (So of course will yours.) Your firm will lose a valued assistant, but the sensational circumstances of your passing will provide an advertisement which they will, when time has soothed their grief, accept as ample compensation. I am sorry I could think of no other way of ensuring your firm a good bargain."

Having thus explained himself, John Turberville Parrot shot the photographer and became the man of the hour.

W. K. H.

Advertisements which Fail to Attract.

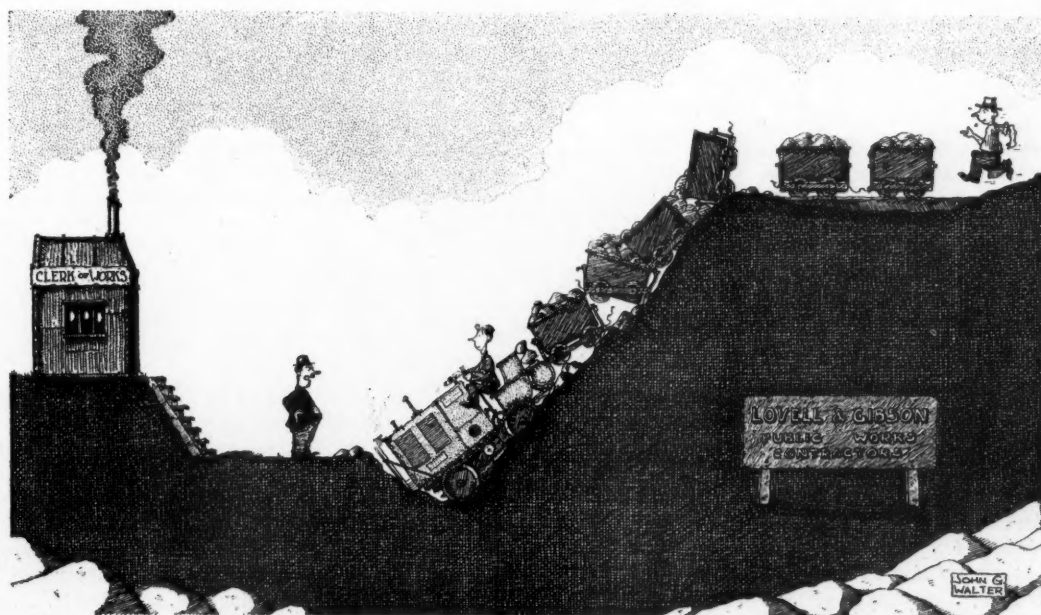
"LADY (owing illness) wishes sell small home-made cake, £150."

Advt. in Periodical.

"A dispute vore wages cause da lightning strike of 2,000 dockers at Hull to-day."

Evening Paper.

Foreign influence is suspected.



"REALLY HENRY, I'M BEGINNING TO WONDER WHETHER YOU ARE THE RIGHT SORT OF PERSON TO BE IN CHARGE OF DELICATE MACHINERY."



SCENE—The National Gallery.

"WHAT I FEEL ABOUT THESE SORT O' PICTURES—WELL, WHEN YOU'VE SEEN 'EM YOU'VE SEEN 'EM."

A Very Weak End

As a guest we all think you're delightful
And hope that you'll soon come again,
For, altho' the week-end has been frightful,
Not once were you bored by the rain;
You brought out the best in my husband,
Whose normal procedure's to grouse,
And poor little Bob and Priscilla will sob
When they find that you're leaving the house.

BUT

Are you sure that you've packed your pyjamas
And haven't forgotten your pipe?
For, altho' you're a dear, I have never, I fear,
Had much faith in the talkative type.
Are you sure you've remembered your tooth-brush
And omitted not even a stud?
You've included your braces, your strop and your book?
I'll discover no traces wherever I look?
If I do, then your name will be mud!
I'm exceedingly sorry you have to go home,
But I'm hanged if I'll forward a sponge or a comb!

At your job I have heard you're amazing,
Ambitious and bursting with zeal,
And I've often heard hostesses praising
Your marvellous social appeal.
In fact, Mr. Bingham, you're *perfect*,
A man I was lucky to find,
And I'd bitterly grieve if you happened to leave
More than nice recollections behind.

So

Are you sure that you've packed your pyjamas,
Your dressing-gown, razor and ties?
For the cleverest men are inclined now and then
To forget they're the owners of eyes.
You declare that you've overlooked *nothing*,
And negligence flatly deny . . . ?
Well, if that is the case all I've said's out of place—
It is now nearly eight and the train's never late,
So good-bye, Mr. Bingham, good-bye! . . .
COME BACK, MR. BINGHAM! He can't hear me call,
But the idiot's suitcase is still in the hall.



MUSICAL CHAIRS AT GENEVA

MUSSOLINI. "ALL RIGHT, THAT PUTS THE LID ON IT. I SHAN'T PLAY ANY MORE."



The Trophy

IN the old days, when we were all Dull Young Things together, we used to play a game called Lotto, in which one did, or didn't, win a prize. A new and—naturally—mechanised form of this has now appeared and is probably to be seen everywhere.

Charles and I met it in France—and not once or twice either. Wherever we went, there it was—a kind of claw, at the end of a little crane, inside a glass case, and underneath the claw, embedded in a mountain of unholy-looking little green sweets, were all the prizes. Some better, some worse.

The high-water-mark was a very superior-looking camera, from which the eye was led on through electric torches, gun-metal cigarette-cases, pocket-knives, china dogs, down to pencils and undefinable objects that hadn't really anything to recommend them except their nice bright colours.

The claw could be manipulated by means of a lever, and I forgot to say

that there was a slot in which to drop francs. (Curious, really, to have forgotten that, because from one point of view it was the *raison-d'être* of the whole thing. But one continually did. Whoever invented the claw was almost certainly a psychologist of no mean order.)

Well, knowing that Charles hadn't much enjoyed his holiday so far, because of the well-known inferiority of French cooking and the infuriating habit that French people have of talking French, I decided to give him a happy evening with the claw.

"To-night, Charles, we're going up to The Grand Hotel on the links after dinner."

"Why?" said Charles rather coldly.

"Because it'll be a very nice change after the *pension*, and anyway I'm tired of looking at the *Illustration* for May 1926, good though it is. Besides, there's that claw thing, where you just turn a lever and you *may* get a camera, or an electric torch, or even a mauve china dog for the mantelpiece in your dressing-room."

"I've never seen anybody get any-

thing yet. The blessed claw always lets go at the last minute, or else it doesn't take hold of anything at all."

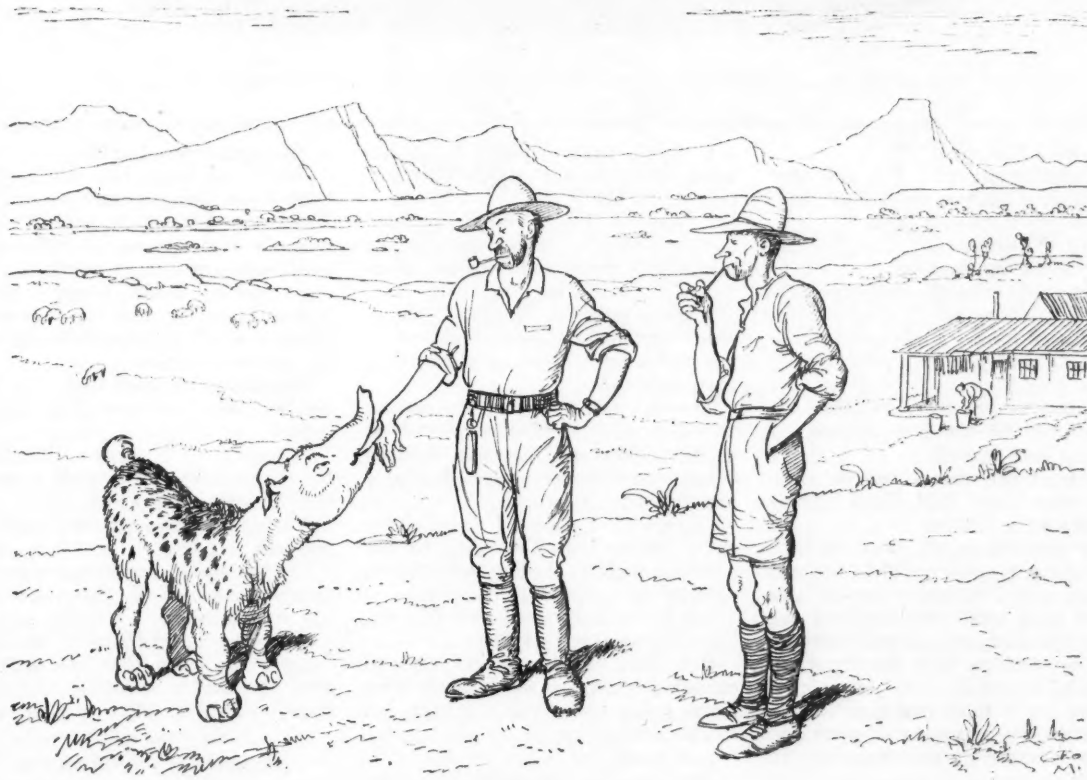
"One man once got a cigarette-lighter. The father and mother of the boy at the next table who dives were in Dinard last week, and they met some people who were staying at The Grand Hotel, and they—the people—were actually *there* when the man got the cigarette-lighter. They saw it in his very hand."

It seemed to me that Charles looked dazed rather than impressed by this clear and analytical testimony, but at all events he came up to The Grand Hotel that evening after dinner.

There was the usual group round the claw. There was—also as usual—the camera, in the very front of the glass case, and there were all the well-known trophies strewn about in a careless profusion, embedded in the green sweets.

People were dashing from the claw to the concierge, asking for one-franc pieces, and the conversation that one heard was also of a familiar nature.

"It really was *very* near that time!"



"CURIOUS LITTLE BEAST, AIN'T 'E? I OFTEN THINK 'E 'AS A TOUCH OF THE ELEPHANT IN 'IM. I TOOK A THORN OUT OF 'IS 'OOOF WHEN 'E WAS A PUP AND 'E'S NEVER FORGOTTEN IT."



"OF COURSE, SARAH, SEEING IT ON THE FILMS GIVES YOU NO IDEA OF THE WONDERFUL AIR."

"*Tiens ! Il a glissé !*"

"I almost thought I'd got that pencil then—but you see it *slips*. Give me some more francs, dear."

"Try the camera."

"I should try the torch."

"Why not try for the leather pocket-book?"

"*Plus en avant, Madame !*"

"*Mais non—plus en arrière !*"

"*Ça y est !*"

"That was *very* near, that time. It just slipped at the last minute. I *must* try once more."

"I don't believe one can get anything—the claw just isn't strong enough for the weights."

Two Frenchmen, an American boy, his mother, three schoolgirls, one old gentleman and myself countered this on the spot with the story of the visitor who had actually been seen by reliable witnesses with the cigarette-lighter in his hand.

When the hubbub had died down a bit I took my place in the queue and Charles produced a handsome supply of francs.

I didn't catch the camera at the first try.

I hadn't expected to.

I didn't even capture it at the tenth attempt—and that didn't surprise me either.

"Think of BRUCE and the spider," I said to Charles, who looked utterly blank but went and got ten more francs from the concierge.

A great many more people, not so much undeterred by my failures as positively exhilarated by them, then took their turns.

The claw twice touched the camera and then slid off it, once picked up a pin-cushion and instantly dropped it again, and several times landed a handful of green sweets.

"Charles," I said, "I've suddenly got a feeling that I'm going to win something. It's a feeling that's never deceived me yet."

"If it's the camera," said Charles, "you'll probably be lynched."

But the feeling wasn't precise enough for me to know exactly *what* I was going to win. I just knew I'd win something.

And I did.

The claw hovered—clutched—slipped—clutched again—and closed for good upon a small cylindrical object of salmon-pink.

The uproar was terrific.

When the prize had finally been landed and the glass case opened and I actually had it in my hands, I recognised it almost at once as a needle-case, or *étui*, in celluloid.

"There is," I said firmly, "*always* a satisfaction in winning something, however small its intrinsic value may be, just by chance."

Everybody agreed that this was neither more nor less than human nature.

It wasn't till we were walking back to the *pension* in modest triumph that Charles remarked—

"What do you suppose that thing is worth?"

I repeated my sentiment about intrinsic worth being immaterial, human nature and so on.

"Because," said Charles, "so far as I can make it out, that *étui*, or whatever you call it, has cost us exactly twenty-eight francs." E. M. D.

Opportunity for Calumnists

"Newspaper requires first-rate Columnist: under 30; able to buy or re-write material and with exceptional knowledge of libel."

Advt. in Daily Paper.

Ideas

"It's absolutely marvellous to me, Mr. Conkleshill," said one of my fair admirers the other day, "how you manage to get such screamingly funny ideas week after week. I've always thought I could be a writer myself, but I never have *any* ideas. Tell me, dear Mr. Conkleshill—how do you do it?"

I laughed modestly.

"I suppose it's just born *in* one," I said. "I certainly never have any trouble getting ideas. They occur to one naturally. In one's bath, while one is eating one's dinner . . . Your true humorist does not need to rack his brains for ideas, they just *come* . . ."

It was bad luck that Edith should happen to join us at that moment.

"Don't you believe a word he says," she told my fair admirer. "It's just his vanity. As matter of fact he has the most dreadful difficulty in getting hold of an idea of any sort. Saying they just *come* indeed! First of all, after breakfast he sits down in an armchair and lights a cigarette and starts scowling, and if I so much as poke my head round the door he screams at me to go away. At about eleven he shouts out that he wants a cup of strong tea. Then he sits down and drinks the tea, and by lunch-time the tea-cup is full of the dead bodies of cigarettes."

"Absolutely untrue," I said to my fair admirer. "Or at any rate grossly exaggerated. Possibly I smoke a cigarette or so to assist the even flow of thought, but as for scowling . . ."

Edith took no notice.

"Then after lunch he says that he's decided to give up writing because he knows he'll never again get an idea as long as he lives. 'I'll get a nice steady job as a greengrocer,' he says, 'or maybe an undertaker in a district where a lot of editors die.' And he looks in the Situations Vacant column of *The Times* to see if there are any vacancies for inexperienced hands in the undertaking business. But all he can find is advertisements saying that it's perfectly easy to make lots of money writing stories. So then he goes down to the village and has a drink, and then comes home and sits at his typewriter with glassy eyes—"

"What you call glassiness," I interrupted, "is merely a far-away intellectual absorption."

"Nothing of the kind," said Edith. "It is just plain beer. After a bit he comes out of his stupor and shouts out that he wants another cup of very strong tea. Under the influence of this he occasionally gets a faint shadow of



"NOT ANOTHER TOUCH! MY JUAN MUST LEARN TO LET WELL ALONE."

an idea, and then the real trouble begins. He marches about the house stamping vigorously and banging into things and muttering to himself, 'Falling into pond . . . Colonel Hogg . . . Why not Great-uncle Ebenezer? . . . No; beard would get in the way. That's no good. No good at all. Why not article on beards? It's been done before, but maybe he wouldn't remember.' By teatime he is so exhausted that he decides to give up work for the day and take me to the pictures."

"You see," I said to my fair admirer, "she admits after all that I am a good husband, taking her out for an evening's fun now and then."

"Nothing of the sort," said Edith.

"I put on my coat and hat and go downstairs to wait for him, and after half-an-hour or so I come to the conclusion that he must at last have realised his worthlessness and committed suicide by filing himself on a spike-file. I go upstairs to recover the body and find him sitting down at his typewriter tapping away for dear life. 'Darling,' I say, with mild reproach in my voice, 'were we not going to the pictures?' But he is so busy that he takes no notice, and I have to sit there until the article is finished."

"So you admit I do *sometimes* get ideas?" I said to Edith.

"You sometimes *think* you do," said Edith.

At the Play

"THIS'LL MAKE YOU WHISTLE" (PALACE).

THE appearance on stage or screen of chocolates filled not with *liqueurs* but with the strongest and most quick-setting cement affords me a joy which I find difficult to express in words. Can there be on earth anything more idiotically pleasurable, I ask you, than to watch a tide of human eloquence gradually but inexorably dammed up by one of these diabolical confections? The humours of stickjaw are first cousins to those of slapstick, and he must be a poor fellow who remains unmoved by such a family.

There is a box of cement chocolates circulating with deadly effect in the first half of this musical comedy, loyally supported by another of explosive cigarettes, and it strikes a note of welcome ruthlessness which continues to the end. No character is immune from the merciless unsentimentality of the authors, Mr. GUY BOLTON and Mr. FRED THOMPSON, to whom the kind of romance which craves expression in blue spotlights and goofy music seems to make no appeal. Some of their wit is very far from prim, and they are not above exhuming jests which, having been known to have played their part in diverting paleolithic man, were thought to be lying in peace—I mean particularly, "There are guests without." "Without what?" "Without gin," a variation which hardly justifies such a desecration of the tomb; but they have devised a number of neat situations and strung them together on a string of agreeably frivolous dialogue, wisely employing the minimum of plot.

Bill (Mr. JACK BUCHANAN), Archie (Mr. DAVID HUTCHESON) and Reggie (Mr. WILLIAM KENDALL) are three men-about-town, and Bill, who is engaged to Joan (Miss JEAN GILLIE), is being pursued by Laura (Miss SYLVIA LESLIE), a dominant young woman with a riding-crop to whom he has once mistakenly become en-

gaged. Laura is not to be persuaded of his change of heart, and he and his two friends decide that the only way

to shake her off is to scandalise her guardian uncle, a noted Puritan, with a well-staged show of dissipation. This is a most statesmanlike plan, but it ignores one possibility which proves its ruin: *Uncle Sebastian* (Mr. CHARLES STONE), tiring suddenly of the narrow path, flings himself into the revels with all the banked-up enthusiasms of seventy years of abstinence.

The dresses, quite good, are at their best in the last scene in an effective arrangement of black and white. Some of the music is a little humdrum, but there are several tunes to remember, especially "Don't Count Your Chickens" and "Without Rhythm." As usual in this type of entertainment in London there are no voices in the cast which can be said to be more than "trained drawing-room," and I still think that makers of musical comedies are committing a grave error in not giving more attention to this point. The microphone has not yet deadened the public's appreciation of a real voice.

But in every other respect this team deserves high marks. They fool infectiously, they can dance, and they know how to bustle the evening along. Miss *ELSIE RANDOLPH*, who plays the rôle of permanent girl-friend to the harassed trio, is a most versatile and attractive *comédienne*; Mr. *BUCHANAN* is notably his engaging self, which is enough; Mr. *HUTCHESON* is a first-class social buffoon with a face of magic proportions, and can wear a cucumber frame round his neck with a dignity few can assume; Mr. *KENDALL* is quick in devilry while looking as solemn as an owl; and Miss *GILLIE* makes an easily justifiable fiancée.

The honeymoon in Spain, by the way, to which Mr. *HUTCHESON* referred, must be sadly out of date. Even Addis Ababa would be a kinder choice. ERIC.

For Men of Leisure Only

"CHAPPED HANDS.—After washing hands, dry them by rubbing in bran. Continue for about a week."

Domestic Hint.



HAIRY PERSIFLAGE

"I KNOW YOU—YOU'RE JACK BUCHANAN."

Joan Longhurst MISS JEAN GILLIE
Bill Hopping MR. JACK BUCHANAN



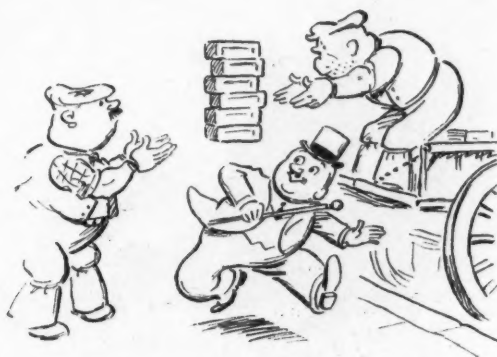
TROUBLE WITH THE GUMS

Archie Codrington MR. DAVID HUTCHESON

SPORTS FOR THE PAVEMENT PEDESTRIAN



LEAPING THE LEAD—



BEATING THE BRICKS—



FRANCING THE PRAMS—



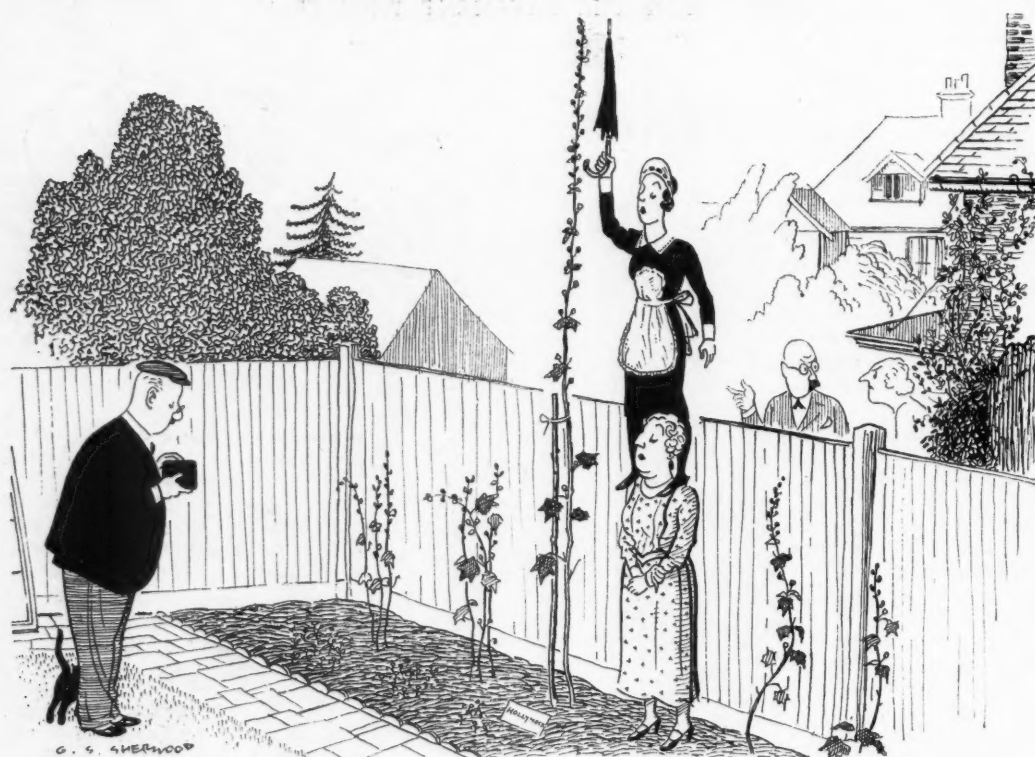
VAULTING THE VENDOR—



THE GIRDER JUMP—



AND THE DRAYMAN'S DIVE.



"... AND IF THE GARDENER'S GUARDIAN STILL DOUBTS MY WORD ..."

St. Patrick's Breastplate

It is a very odd thing, but except in funny stories people hardly ever live up to their racial characteristics. You go to Aberdeen and complete strangers rush up and stand you a drink. You go to Vienna and everything is too dull for words. And if you want to build a hospital an anonymous subscriber weighs in with a cheque for £100,000 and later turns out to be a Jew. It is all very confusing.

It is therefore with considerable pleasure that I read about General O'DUFFY's brigade of Irishmen recruited to serve in the "Irish Crusade against Communism." The thing seems to be so very much in character. Nobody knows, apparently, where the brigade is going or who it is going to fight. But nevertheless two thousand men have been raised, thousands had to be refused, and "various people who sympathise with The Cause have subscribed to pay for the Brigade's victualling and transport." All that remains is to find a nice war. *So Irish.*

But it is not so much the idea of going out and looking for a head to hit which attracts me. After all, people were doing that in the time of the CŒUR DE LION and Irishmen were still doing it at Fontenoy. Nor is it the prospect of a chance meeting on the Continent between General O'DUFFY's Crusaders and the Reverend "DICK" SHEPPARD'S Peace Army. No, it is one little paragraph in General O'DUFFY's circular to his recruits. Each man is instructed to bring "a small portmanteau or valise containing his essential requirements. Just that."

I must confess that I find this completely fascinating. It is like one of those complicated puzzles by *Caliban*. "Mr. O'Toole has joined an army and receives orders to hold himself ready to travel at short notice. He does not know where he is going or with whom he is going to fight. He is told to place his essential requisites in a valise. What does Mr. O'Toole place in the valise?"

It seems to me that Mr. O'Toole can approach the problem in one of two ways:—

(1) Laying the emphasis on the fact that he is going on a journey; or

(2) Laying emphasis on the fact that when he gets there he is going to fight somebody; *i.e.*, the choice is between small clothes and small arms.

But even so it is not easy. Let us assume that Mr. O'Toole, forgetting his racial characteristics for a moment, decides not to meet trouble halfway. He decides to pack the valise with normal traveller's kit and leave out bombs to make room for combs. What sort of clothes does he want? After all, Communism is now a fairly widespread creed and he is quite likely to find himself wearing sledge skins in Algiers or pottering miserably about Siberia in a sun-helmet. Moreover, if he *does* happen to land in a war it may be awkward. Amid ringing cries of "Charge for the glory of Ould Ireland!" the other one thousand, nine hundred and ninety-nine members of the brigade will whip their swords and bayonets from their valises and O'Toole will find himself swept irresistibly towards the enemy lines whirling round

his head a double-edged safety-razor blade.

On the other hand, if he decides that a soldier must neglect dry clothes for dry powder and fills up his valise with cold steel and iron rations, he may find himself in almost equally uncomfortable case. It seems a silly supposition, but suppose for a moment that General O'DUFFY can't find a war, or that the one he finds stops, or that it slips away on the night-train just as the Brigade is arriving, there is O'Toole marooned in a place where it probably rains all the time, with never a dry shirt to change into but a chain-mail one that will be rusty in five minutes, with a heavy valise full of bombs and not a taxi in sight.

Well, I have been into the thing with considerable care, and I have come to the conclusion that the *intelligent* recruit to General O'DUFFY's army will compromise. He will pack his valise, in short, with articles which are essentially dual purpose, useful alike in a war and looking-for-a-war. To wit:—

(1) *A razor* (as unsafety as possible. He can't bother about being safe in a war).

(2) *A Dress Shirt* (clearly essential. Useful for dining with foreign potentates in the dull patches and, if properly "got up," a sort of St. Patrick's breastplate in battle).

(3) *A hand-grenade* (the sort with a handle, with bristles on one side, instantly convertible into a hair-brush).

(4) *A bowler-helmet* (or felt-covered tin-hat).

(5) *A pair of binoculars* (for opera or field use, depending on the context).

(6) *A swordstick*.

(7) *A dozen large green handkerchiefs* (suitable as flags if necessary).

(8) *One of those knives which embody a tin-opener and an entrenching-tool*.

(9) *A pair of those pyjamas with braid on* (comfortable in the night and carry at least the rank of Colonel in the fight).

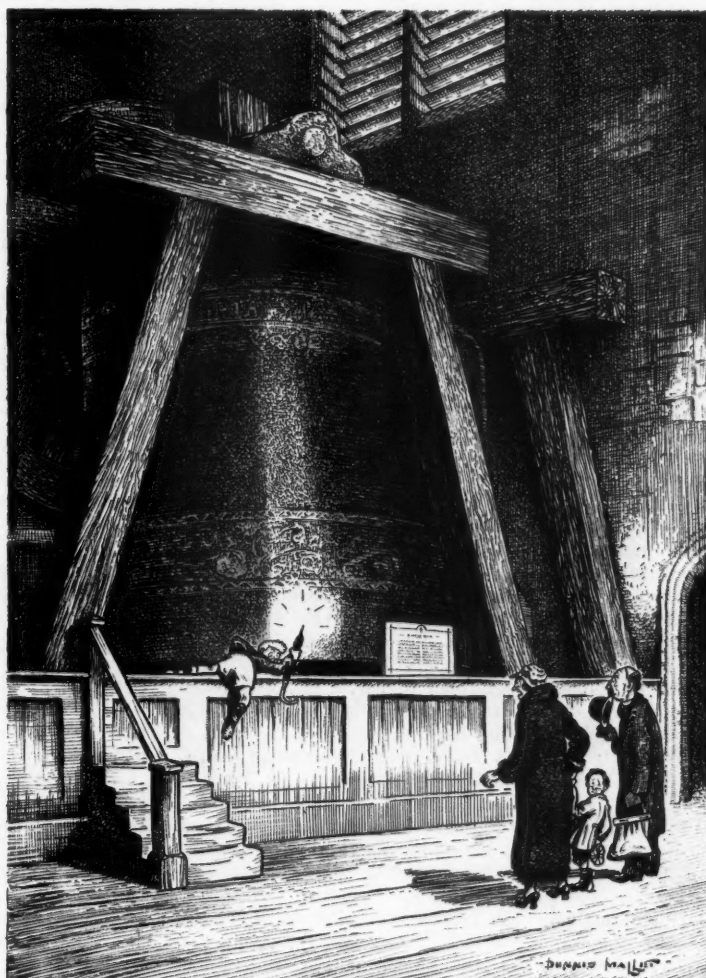
(10) *A rather stiff "pull-through"* (useful as tooth-brush if things are slow).

(11) *Pair of boots and a bottle of gum* (used separately in peace to wear and stick things with, and combined in trench warfare).

(12) *Umbrella*. (Peace: rain. War: air-raids.)

Actually I doubt if all this would go in a valise. But General O'DUFFY specifically states that, if desired, "a small portmanteau" may be brought. I should advise the recruit to desire a portmanteau. The only other thing he really needs can be carried on the person:—

(13) *Hip-flask of rye* (for succouring the wounded in battle).



"STOP THAT, ERNIE! YOU'LL 'AVE ALL THE PEOPLE COMIN' RUNNIN' TO CHURCH."

The Sweets of Deception

["Delight in being bamboozled never loses its savour."—Leaderette in "The Daily Mail."]

'Twas said in the Middle Ages
Vult decipi populus,
And the maxim of ancient sages
Holds equally good for us,
As I gather from close perusal
Of praise in *The Daily Mail*
Lavished on those who bamboozle
And twist the B.P.'s tail.

Never the pot-house closes,
Never the milkman bleats,
But the pressman, ere he reposes,
His solemn *credo* repeats:
"When ouzels cease from ouzling
And doves refrain from coos,

When golfers give up foozling,
And pigs desist from snoozling,
And Methuselah from Methuseling,
And HITLER loves the Jews,
Then only shall bamboozling
Its wonted savour lose."

C. L. G.

The Dog-Star's Rival

"Some ears are tuned to catch sounds that others cannot hear at all. Some people can hear the cry of the bat. KEATS said he knew the rainbow's woof."

Schoolgirl's Essay.

"The Turkish Government have decided to put through the larger part of their suspended naval programme in British ship-building yards, if they can raise a loan of £20."—*Daily Paper*.

We could let them have two or three old tubs at that price.

It All Fits In

"It's all simple," said Mr. Kibitzer, waving his cigar and half-closing one eye, "it's all logical when you know. For instance, there was that bird-fancying picture, *Couple o' Budgies*. You saw that?"

The visitors he had been showing round the film-studio said No, and he agreed that that made a considerable difference.

"Well," he said, "take another. We'll come to that later. Take that war picture that was made round the title of that book of philosophy—what was it called?—*Probably Its Cause*, that's it, *Probably Its Cause*. Now, you remember, the fellow in that was a Norwegian—"

Anxiously consulting among themselves the visitors here interrupted him to murmur deprecatingly that as a matter of fact they hadn't seen *Probably Its Cause* either. Mr. Kibitzer said, Hell! they had to have some background or it was hopeless to discuss the subject. "Now tell me," he said—"let's begin at the beginning again. This gentleman here started it by saying he couldn't make out some of the casting in this new picture they're making about Australian settlers. Now maybe we'll strike common ground if he can tell us why he said that. What struck you as strange, my dear Sir, about the casting of this tale of life and love among the bandicoots?"

The visitor addressed squirmed slightly and muttered in a hoarse tone that it seemed damn silly for a chap like What's-name to be in a film like that.

"By What's-name," said Mr. Kibitzer, "you mean Southampton Jones? Ah, now what did you see him in before? *Dance Session? Boiled-Shirt Bozo?*"

The visitor fumbled grudgingly in his half-digested and inaccurate memories. "It was something—there was a lot of dancing in it," he recalled at length. "Night-clubs or something."

Mr. Kibitzer sighed. "You don't remember the director," he said with absolute conviction. "No. Nor the producer? No. What colour was the girl's hair?" The visitor said it had, he thought, been blonde, or a bit darker. Mr. Kibitzer asked whether he remembered any names in the film at all.

"There was a girl called Mary," the young man said truculently. He felt he was being ill-treated. Mr. Kibitzer said was that her name in the film or her real name? Did he mean Delina Delaney as Mary Smith, or Mary Hemsticz as Paula de Maltravers? "Both those," said Mr. Kibitzer, "were Southampton Jones pictures."

The visitor suddenly announced: "There was a bloke in it who didn't know how to pronounce Pytchley—I remember that. Never laughed so much in—"

"*Boiled-Shirt Bozo* that was," said Mr. Kibitzer at once. "We got fourteen thousand letters telling us how to pronounce Pytchley. They're still arriving from the outposts of Empire. Well, now we're getting somewhere. We've got some common ground, boys and girls. This gentleman thinks, if I get him right, that it's funny to see Southampton Jones as an Australian settler after seeing him as a hotel page-boy who danced in the evenings. Now let me explain. It's all in the system. Perfectly simple," Mr. Kibitzer said, "perfectly logical. There's reasons."

His cigar had gone out and he spent some time extracting from the table match-stand the only match that stood head upwards. Replacing it head downwards and relighting his

cigar with a massive petrol-lighter, he went on: "Now, working backwards from *Boiled-Shirt Bozo*. The scene of that was laid in a hotel, and Ole Smojk got the job of directing it because he did so well with the hotel scenes in *Sun Don't Shine On Tuesdays*, that whimsy-piece, you remember that, where the boy and girl made love in a room where there was an escape of steam. Well, now, go back a little further and you find that Ole Smojk was given the job of directing that because he'd directed *Probably Its Cause*, and the fellow in that was a Norwegian, and the girl's father in *Sun Don't Shine On Tuesdays* was a Norwegian too. And of course Ole's a Swede, if it comes to that."

"It all fits in," said the most sardonic of the visitors. Mr. Kibitzer looked at him gratefully and proceeded: "Now, coming to Southampton Jones. He was the Norwegian in *Probably Its Cause*, and he was given the part in *Sun Don't Shine On Tuesdays* because the girl lead in it was the same as had played opposite him in *Couple o' Budgies*. That was the bird-fancying picture where he made that crack: 'I don't fancy pigeons myself'—remember? Oh, no, you didn't see it. Well, the next picture was *Dance Session*. Let me see, why was Southampton given the lead there?"

A feminine visitor observed that accidents will happen. "Not in the film business," said Mr. Kibitzer, looking at her reprovingly; "there was a good reason, if I can remember it. . . . Oh, yes, it was because the story was by the same people as had done the adaptation of *Probably Its Cause*."

"It still seems to me damn silly," declared the visitor who had started the whole trouble, "that this fellow What's-name should be in a film like—"

"I'm coming to that, boy, I'm coming to that," said Mr. Kibitzer. "Now, the director of this picture is Champaign Bottl, and he got the job because he made a success of one about three years ago that was chockful of Australians too. But it so happens that in that picture there were four Norwegians; maybe you remember, they had a scene where they sang an aria from a HANDEL oratorio, 'Then shall the posts,' or 'Now was the door,' or something. Well, I've just been telling you how Southampton Jones's work is intimately bound up with Norwegians. There you are. There's the reason. It's all perfectly logical. It all fits in."

"It fits in something fierce," the young man said. "But still I think it's damn silly to put a chap like What's-name—"

Mr. Kibitzer stood up. "Boy," he said, "what you need is background."
R. M.

Serious Consequences of Directors' Bathing Parties

"The poisoning is thought to be due to affluent entering the water from works alongside the canal."—*Daily Paper*.



"Tweeds are the ideal tramping garb, with soft collar and cap or soft hat. Stiff collars, bowler hats, and umbrellas only make for discomfort on walks, besides being out of keeping with moorland and mountain surroundings."—*Holiday Association's Hints*.



"SORRY I'M LATE, MRS. SMITH. BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU EVERYWHERE, BUT IT'S LIKE LOOKING FOR A NEEDLE IN A HAYSTACK."

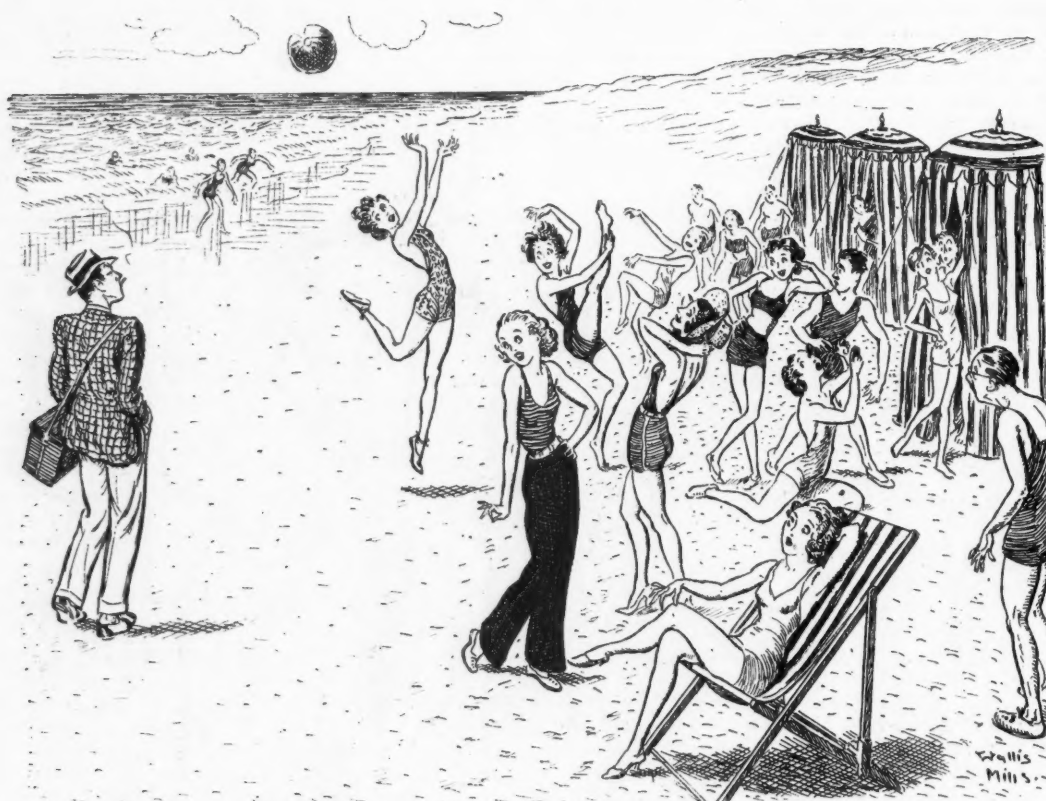
The Sportsman's Dream

THE limbs that last winter were booted
And tailored for runs in the shires
Are now looking strange in the homespuns
That reek of West Highland peat fires,
And, forgetting the quiv'ring impatience
Of hot Irish blood to the fore,
With your knees on a hill-pony's shoulders
You make for the heights of Ben More.

The glance that sought smooth open country—
Judged a fence in the flash of an eye—
Now seeks out the scantiest cover,
The cleft in the rock where you lie

To take aim at the Pride of the Forest,
Count the points of that grand head of his,
And snatch at the pride of the victor—
Before you have missed him, that is.

There's a nightmare that frequently haunts me
When, with whisky and venison fed,
I stretch out my hill-wearied muscles
On MacAlistair's four-poster bed:
'Tis that on all fours I am creeping
In pursuit of a Leicestershire fox,
Or else I am riding Red Royal
At a gallop o'er Badenoch's rocks.



THE POWER OF THE PHOTOGRAPHIC PRESS

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Searchlights on a Century

THE most animated of all the tours taken by historians into the immediate past is *The Hundred Years* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 12/6), so brilliantly revisited by Mr. PHILIP GUEDALLA. The world that began to be Victorian in 1837 was just ceasing (it will be remembered) to be METTERNICH'S; America was undergoing a primitive depression; the knout was upholding authority in Imperial Russia. But Mr. GUEDALLA introduces us to the disciplinary *palka*; tells us exactly what faced METTERNICH on his sixty-fourth birthday and President VAN BUREN on his inauguration, and telescopes the familiar narrative of VICTORIA'S début into something stronger and more significant than its component parts. This heightened significance, compounded of first-hand evidence skilfully marshalled, invests his chosen glimpses of the Western world (with America thrown in) across the succeeding century. Towards their close, personal experience supplements the records of predecessors; but the historian claims, with TALLEYRAND, to "recount," not to "censure or approve." Personally I found his obvious political bias palatable, though neither Communist nor Fascist is likely to view it with enthusiasm.

Prophetic Fantasy

In 1925 a little-known French author named RENÉ CLAIR wrote a novel in which he so wildly satirised the film industry as to seem to depart very far from reality; but having become in the meanwhile probably the greatest director of our time, he now admits, in his preface to the English translation of the book, that "experience has shown him that, in the weirdest of all worlds, sense and insanity are interchangeable terms." This preface is full of illuminating and depressing comments, as when he says, in describing how inflexibly the artist in films is up against the box-office factor, that if films acted exclusively by trained frogs were suddenly to prove the most profitable, "producers would furiously outbid each other to acquire the brightest specimens of batrachian talent." But *Star Turn* (CHATTO AND WINDUS, 7/6) is also well worth reading for the wit and perception of its story, which, charmingly told, deals with the staggering effects of mass-publicity on the simple mind of a film-star, who is driven to confuse himself (a confusion shared by a large part of the civilised world) with the Deity.

Exploiting Liberty

There is something very attractive about Mr. NIGEL BALCHIN'S *Lightbody on Liberty* (COLLINS, 7/6) and I cannot say exactly what it is. It is partly that *Alfred Lightbody*, the grocer, who in *Sir Joseph's* words is an "odd little man, but essentially likeable," is consistently odd and yet never

so odd that you would be surprised to run into him at any street corner. It is also that Mr. BALCHIN's way of presenting him, though completely understanding and sympathetic, is full of a stealthy kind of humour which is always catching you unawares. *Mr. Lightbody* inadvertently infringes regulations which seem to him to be "tommy rot," and this brings him into the newspapers as the innocent victim of bureaucratic tyranny. There he catches the eye of *Sir Joseph Sheers*, a self-advertising millionaire who starts a League of Liberty ("Fair play for all and less whistle") and runs it for a month or two with all the resources of a very efficient and utterly cynical publicity organisation. When its news-value peters out he drops the whole scheme for a fresh one, leaving *Mr. Lightbody* dazed and disillusioned. I finished the book sincerely hoping that we had not heard the last of him or of *Sir Joseph* and his minions.

From "The Shrimp Girl" to "Sigismunda"

Miss MARJORIE BOWEN's portrait of *William Hogarth* (METHUEN, 16/-) and his London is as vivid and racy as you would expect from so practised a hand; but her handling of his work inevitably finds her in unsatisfying juxtaposition to LAMB, HAZLITT and AUSTIN DOBSON. She paints with picturesque appreciation the cosy domestic interiors of the eighteenth century and the squalor without, and gives in illuminating detail the career that culminated in a town house in Leicester Square and a "villakin" at Chiswick. But for the genius who used his unique powers to dramatize the corruption of rich and poor she has nothing but the condescension of a "modern" for a teller of stories, a painter of recognizable objects and the "moralizer" of both. What Mr. BLUNDEN calls "the force of argument . . . that controlled that multitudinous sea of significant circumstances" strikes Miss BOWEN as a concession to popular taste, though her whole narrative goes to show that HOGARTH made very few concessions to anybody. I believe myself he enjoyed his moralizing, sterile and Calvinistic though it was, and that Miss BOWEN would have written a better book if she had tried to enjoy it too.

Jam To-morrow

Miss ETHEL MANNIN wished to write an entirely unbiassed book about conditions in Russia and (to misquote BUNYAN) "with great difficulty and danger she has come hither with" *South to Samarkand* (JARROLD, 12/6). In a note the author explains the shortage of illustrations. She took a lady artist-interpreter with her, but this companion was a Communist and insisted that she should write three chapters



"YOU NO LIVE FOR DAT MACHINE ALL DAY?"
"I NO AGREE FOR THIS MACHINE. MY SON FOR COLLEGE SAY I BE FIVE FOOT EIGHT INCHES; DIS CLOCK SAY I BE TEN STONE, AND DAT BOOK FOR TOP SAY I BE NINETEEN YEARS OLD."

of her own U.S.S.R. propaganda as a condition of delivery of the sketches. Miss MANNIN refused consent as she wished to be completely neutral in her volume. Courage, perseverance and an admitted temper carried her into forbidden areas in spite of bureaucratic bullying by Soviet aristocrats, the worst bullies being women! The general impression the book leaves on a reader's mind is one of lack of sanitation, disgusting food, appalling transport, and the standard statement to visitors that the nation is in a state of transition and all will be right soon. I found a great deal to enjoy in this sensible, frank and open-minded book.

A Tip for Christmas

I wish that something in the nature of that list of winning horses which the racing experts present to us every season

could be looked for in the case of books. This is because I like to know that I am proved right when I prophesy; and if there were such a list I should expect *Worzel Gummidge* (BURNS, OATES AND WASHBOURNE, 3/6), whose first engagement is the Children's Christmas Book Stake, to appear high up on it. Anyhow, Miss BARBARA EUPHAN TODD has written a perfectly delightful book about two children who made friends with a scarecrow, one *Worzel Gummidge*, and, avoiding the tempting pitfall of making him an entirely benevolent and sensible old pet, she has produced a character who is likely to live in many a memory for many a long year. The only doubt I have in recommending her book is that it may be a shade what in my family language many years ago was called "gobeyish," but I believe that modern children do not creep as easily as we did then. Oh! and in the first of the many new editions inherent in the fulfilment of my prophecy, will Miss TODD explain why *Mrs. Bloomsbury-Barton* wore two hats?

Captain Wakelam Calling

Rugby Football is the latest addition to the Modern Sports Series published by DENT at 6/-. Captain H. B. T. WAKELAM, whose voice (generally, alas! saying, "He puts the ball in—and the whistle's gone") is familiar to all enthusiasts, has written a careful and competent text-book. There is a full section on the rules of the game worth more than a passing glance, plenty of advice about actual play and the usual chapters on captaincy, training and so on. Captain WAKELAM has some good things to say about clubs and the duty owed to them by the members both on and off the field; but, if the truth be told, there is little that is really new in the book. How should there be, when one considers the number of books on Rugger that have appeared since the War? It must be a hard matter to shed any fresh light on the best way to give and take passes when Messrs. WAKEFIELD, DAVIES and COVE-SMITH (to name but three) have already bent their brains on the problem. Still, for the beginner whose shelves are as yet innocent of the Rugby classics this will be a welcome and most helpful handbook.

Risky Proceedings

Dope in various forms and disguises has of late figured so prominently in contemporary fiction that I was a little surprised to find that *Judy of Bunter's Buildings* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 7/6) was dependent upon the use and abuse of it. But although this tale as a whole will not add to Mr. E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM's reputation as a story-teller, it does contain more originality than is usually to be found in yarns about drug-fiends and dope-smugglers. *Sir Gregory Fawsitt*, who for sound reasons skated on very thin ice,

is easy to understand, but I never succeeded in getting a clear comprehension of his partner in this campaign, *Lady Judith Martellon*. And a remark of *Judith's* on p. 298 did nothing to lessen my bewilderment. Nevertheless this is a readable tale of adventure, and much as I have always admired Mr. OPPENHEIM's powers of recovery from difficult situations, I have seldom seen him use them with greater effect.

The Autocrat in the Theatre

In *Marionettes at Home* (MICHAEL JOSEPH, 7/6), Mr. C. S. FORESTER invites those who have at once a passion for the theatre, a superfluity of energy and a taste for autocracy to turn their attention to the puppet theatre and be their own landlords and managers, authors and producers, décor designers, costumiers, carpenters and electricians, and to control, as no author has yet found it possible to control, their interpreters—an implied promise the disingenuousness

of which the author would be the first gaily to acknowledge. At the price of a wrecked home and ruined professional work, "Forester's Marionettes" were brought from zero to the point of proud accomplishment of receiving "good money" for professional engagements in the space of a little over six months. The story of how it was done is told with an enthusiasm which will produce a crop—in appropriate soils. A highly concentrated attention is necessary if the technical details are to be properly grasped. Diagrams supplementing the photographs would have helped immensely; but perhaps the author's idea is

that serious inquirers will be the better for the effort involved, while the others may well be content with a brightly-written account of an engaging adventure.

Volume 19

More than once I have been able to praise PHILIP ALLAN's "Sportsman Library," and the latest addition to it, *Swimming and Water Polo* (5/-), is as full of useful information as any of its eighteen predecessors. Anyone who is intent on teaching the young idea to swim will find that Mr. W. J. HOWCROFT's advice is plainly and sensibly expressed. For instance, he says, "I believe the aim at the first lesson should be to get the beginners afloat for a few yards," and I for one am wholly with him. This book, however, is not only for pupils and teachers, but also contains items of interest in the history of swimming and in the development of what has grown into a popular game, water polo. Only once do I find myself at variance with Mr. HOWCROFT. "Forty years ago," he states, "a woman who ventured into the sea clad from neck to ankles in a sack-like robe was considered guilty of a social outrage." I would add at least a decade to his forty years.

NOTICE.—Contributions or Communications requiring an answer should be accompanied by a stamped and addressed Envelope or Wrapper.

The entire Copyright in all Articles, Sketches, Drawings, etc., published in "PUNCH" is specifically reserved to the Proprietors throughout the countries signatory to the BERNE CONVENTION, the U.S.A., and the Argentine. Reproductions or imitations of any of these are therefore expressly forbidden. The Proprietors will, however, always consider any request from authors of literary contributions for permission to reprint.

